THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Registered Cable Operators in the Country

2947. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of registered Cable Operators operating in the country as per latest assessment and percentage growth over the past five years, State-wise particularly in Maharasthra;

(b) what is the tariff charged by Cable Operator and range of inter-state variation and inter-city variation in Maharashtra;

(c) the estimated revenue collected by the Cable Operators in Maharashtra and taxes paid to Government alongwith the estimates of evasion of taxes by the Cable Operators; and

(d) the major problems raised by the organisations of Cable Operators and steps taken to resolve them?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Rates charged by different cable operators in the country are not maintained by Government. The statistics regarding the total number of registered cable operators are not maintained centrally. The Report on "Indian Media Sector", prepared by HSBC in October 2000, estimates that there are 30,000 local cable operators in the country.

(c) Data with regard to revenue collected by operators in different States and taxes paid by them to Government are not compiled separately. There are no estimates evasion of taxes, if any, by the cable operators in Maharashtra.

(d) Some of major problems raised by the cable operators are (i) hiking of subscription fees by pay channels (ii) compulsion to show all the pay channels of a particular channel company i.e. bundling of channels. (iii) impositon of Entertainment Taxes by State Government etc. The charges levied by private channels are determined by market forces and Government has no *locus standi* in this regard.

Auction of Prime-Time Slots by Prasar Bharati

2948. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state: